

MAPLE GROVE TRANSIT COMMISSION
City of Maple Grove
Meeting of September 27, 2011

MINUTES

Members Present: Rose Peterson, Curt Herwers, Ronda Zegar, Terry Coss, and Michelle Driessen

Members Absent: Jaime Renner, Laura Ayala and Jodi Carman Kortsha.

Also Present: Mike Opatz – City of Maple Grove, Bruce Bakee-MetroTransit, and Doyne Parsons – Metro Transit.

Call to Order

Transit Commission Chair Rose Peterson called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m.

Open Forum

No one from the public spoke during the open forum.

Approve Minutes

The Commission approved the meeting minutes of May 24, 2011.

Discussion of Routes and Statistics

Opatz reviewed the monthly ridership summaries for July and August 2011, plus the most recent daily ridership reports. Opatz noted that ridership is up 6 percent in 2011 compared to 2010 and that daily ridership levels in mid September are illustrating an upward trend in ridership levels. The Transit Station ramp was 100 percent full today.

The Commissioners gave updates regarding their commute and routes:

- Rose Peterson – No major issues on the Route 782, but still occasionally have driver's not announce the next stop information before leaving Minneapolis in the p.m. The roundabouts on Zachary Lane are now open and provide great benefits for the 782 buses as they now can exit the park-and-ride lot from 96th Avenue much easier and quicker.
- Curt Herwers – All is well on the 781. However, some drivers need to be more aware of and limit their "jackrabbit" starts and "hard" stops in downtown Minneapolis. While it is a comfort concern it can be an even bigger safety issue as some riders are falling.
- Michelle Driessen – The 780 pm trip #4 has been coming five to seven minutes late and there have been some issues with the bus stop pull cords inside the buses.

- Jodi Carman Kortsha – Absent
- Terry Coss – No issues with the Route 783, and it is really nice to now have a regular driver assigned to the trip..
- Ronda Zegar – Heard some complaints about the narrow aisle of the coach buses, but others really like the overall comfort of the ride.
- Laura Ayala – Absent.
- Jaime Renner – Absent.

Legislative and Funding Update

Opatz stated that the state government shutdown ended with a special legislative session on July 19, 2011. That session included a Transportation Bill that had a significant funding impact to Maple Grove Transit. In the bill, public transit for the metro area received a funding cut of \$51.8M for the next two fiscal years. The Metropolitan Council believes that the transit section of the bill (see attachment) allows them to cut funding to the suburban providers for a total of \$7.2M for the two-year period. Furthermore, the Met Council believes that have the authority to decide how that funding cut is implemented. They have taken the approach that those suburban providers with sufficient funding reserves shall pay the bulk of the \$7.2 million and have assigned a \$4.2M funding cut to Maple Grove over two years. The City questions the Met Council authority to makes these level of funding cuts and we continues to explore options to get the decisions reduced or overturned. However, it appears not to be very likely the funding cuts will be reduced. The cuts should not initially cause any service cuts to Maple Grove, but it does greatly hamper our ability to expand services in the future and to add the second phase of Parkway Station. The City sent a letter to the Metropolitan Council stating the City's objection to the funding cut decision.

Route 782 Test Routing Via Highway 610 and 169

The Transit Commission discussed the Route 782 test routing via Highway 610 and 169. From Monday September 19 through Friday September 23, all Route 782 morning trips inbound to Minneapolis traveled via a trial detour routing of Highway 610 and Highway 169 versus using Zachary Lane and Hemlock Lane to access I-694. Opatz noted that shoulder lanes are not in place on Highway 169, so trips 4 and 5 experienced some delays due to traffic congestion. Trips 1 and 2 did show that the travel time for faster as congestion has not yet built up during the early portion of the rush-hour. Trip 3 did not show much of an improvement or delay via the detour. Opatz will further review this matter with Metro Transit to determine if it is prudent to have trips 1 and 2 travel 610 and 169 while trips 3, 4, and 5 travel via Zachary and Hemlock. Opatz has concerns that snowfall will create slower travel times for trips one and two if they use the detour route.

Operators Guide

As an information item, Opatz reviewed the Operator Guide for Maple Grove Transit. All Metro Transit drivers are trained on these unique elements of the service when assigned a Maple Grove route.

Bus Service Levels for the Holidays

Opatz reviewed the rider flyers that communicate reduced service days for Friday November 25, Monday December 26, and Monday January 2 due to Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Holidays.

Miscellaneous Updates

- Rider Survey - The last general rider survey was conducted in March 1993. Over the next couple months, Opatz will be working on issuing another rider survey. In order to meet federal regulations for federal funding this survey will ask demographic information related to gender, race, and income level.
- Route 789 - Opatz review tow Route 789 rider flyers related to the current detour and bus boarding procedures at the Maple Grove Transit Station.
- Jefferson Lines – Opatz referenced the City newsletter article on the inter-city service that appeared in the Fall 2011 issue.
- Service Changes for December 2011 – Opatz noted that a few changes are being explored for the December 2011 round of service changes to help address the ridership increases on the 781 and 785 most notably adding one inbound and two outbound trips on the 785.
- State Fair Bus Ridership - Metro Transit State Fair buses provided just over 543,000 rides for the 2011 State Fair, a 16% increase over 2010. Metro Transit provided rides from 11 park-and-ride lots and on three regular routes. From the Maple Grove Transit Station, Metro Transit provided 20,475 rides in 2011, which was a 28 percent increase over the 2010 ridership mark of 15,998 riders.

Adjourn / Next Meeting

- Next Scheduled Regular Meeting: November 29, 2011
- Being no other business, the meeting was adjourned at 7:45 p.m.
- Minutes submitted by Mike Opatz, Transit Administrator.